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DD/S 69-5363

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Support

SUBJECT : OTR's Comments on Reports of Problem Solving Seminars 1, 2 and 3

REFERENCE : DD/S Memo No. 69-5089 dtd 17 Nov '69, same subject

1. This memorandum is in response to the referent request for comments on the reports of Support Directorate Seminars 1, 2 and 3. OTR's comments are directed mainly to the Findings and General Observations of SDS-1 and to Recommendations as stated in the reports of SDS-2 and SDS-3.

Report of SDS-1:

Findings

a. Resources Allocation Board. This Board duplicates the responsibilities of the Office Heads of the Support Services. Since any significant change in Support operations will affect each Office, it is not necessary to formalize such a Board.

b. SIPS. Concur. Any additional information SIPS can provide for the education of Agency managers should be continued.

c. Belt Tightening. This is too general for comment.

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

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d. Development of Support Generalists. Concur (reference SDS-2).

e. Shift Work and Space Consolidation. We agree that Support activities should be in one contiguous area, but the findings need amplification before further comments can be made.

f. Reorganization. The heading is of potentially great interest, but the views are not sufficient to provide for comment.

General Observations

a. Use of Proprietaries in Contract Personnel. Agree.

b. Civil Service Administration of Agency Retirement Checks. Agree. It is worth a study.

c. Evaluation of Training. We agree with SDS-1's overall objectives and believe OTR is attempting to achieve them. Paragraph 3, however, needs to be expanded since it appears that SDS is indicating that OTR can economize on people and costs.

d. Degradation of Services. Agree, though the problem appears one of setting priorities.

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f. Support Directorate Offices Control of Personnel. Do not agree; the approach is impractical.

g. All Support Costs to be Computed in the Total Project Cost. Agree.

h. Centralized Applicant Selection. Agree. Action is already underway in the Office of Personnel in the recently reorganized Placement Division.

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- i. Extension of the Co-op Program. Agree.
- j. Duplication of Functions, Responsibilities and Efforts. Agree. We would have preferred that the SDS-1 identify some examples of duplication of efforts so that we could comment more positively on their observation.

Report of SDS-2:

OTR supports the recommendation that a program for increasing interoffice assignments should be established within the Support Services Directorate. SDS-2 did an excellent job of staffing out the proposal and of presenting their findings. Our experience with rotational exchanges, however, prompts us to qualify their recommendations:

We do not foresee that the program will be so broad in scope as to require a project manager to administer its day-to-day operations. We doubt that it will involve consultations and decisions on a daily, or even a weekly schedule. Officers selected must be volunteers, thus we foresee a program of modest proportions which will require no more administrative support than the services of a secretary or an administrative assistant to maintain position/personnel inventories, to prepare agenda for Board meetings, and to serve as recorder for these meetings.

SDS-2 recommends that OTR develop a course of instruction in day-to-day problems to supplement supervision and management courses now conducted. We now offer courses in "Class A Station Accounting," which includes on-the-job training [] and the "Field Finance and Logistics Course" which prepares personnel for workaday problems encountered in these fields. An "Office of Personnel Notebook" has been developed as an excellent primer on personnel administration.

We recommend that, if this is to be a centrally controlled program, each office should at the outset nominate for selection all qualified officers of the career service in order that a standing reservoir of talent may be established, from which rotational candidates can be selected throughout the future. Officers

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would be removed from the inventory for poor performance or immobility, and new ones added as Heads of Career Services adjudge them to be qualified.

SDS-2 feels that failure in the program should be made a matter of record. We recommend that the Fitness Report alone should suffice for this purpose. It should factually report shortcomings, but should also point to the lack of generalist experience the officer brought to the job. Volunteers should not be unduly penalized.

There are many pitfalls attendant to rotational exchanges. We stress that, in the planning for such a program, conscientious attention must be given to the imbalances which can seriously affect CSGAs, to the need to ensure that a rotational officer is given a meaningful assignment by the gaining service, and to safeguard against his being overlooked for advancement and future development by his own Career Service.

Report of SDS-3:

General Comment

Members of SDS-3, whose problem was to define the kind of midcareer training that should be given to employees not selected for the Midcareer Executive Development Course (MEDC) have said in essence that the entire Midcareer Program has to be reevaluated. In the effort to isolate programs for non-Midcareerists, SDS-3 has identified with the Midcareer Program itself, marking difficulties that all of us are well aware of. If we can accept their evaluation that MEDC is nothing more than a course, and that it does not in any significant way affect the career development of a Midcareerist, then it is wrong to superimpose--as SDS-3 avows several times it does not want to do--another course plus courses at external facilities, and a counseling system. The need is for a whole new look at MEDC and for establishing a course for all employees at midcareer. The vehicle may well be a two-week course, taking the best of the current MEDC, and giving it ten or twelve times a year, for an input of 500 - 600 midcareerists annually.

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Recommendations

- a. Maximize Use of MEDC. MEDC is already maximized. As a six-week course, frequency and enrollments are at an optimum level.
- b. Two-week Course for All GS-13 and GS-14 Career Employees. (Presumed to be for non-Midcareerists.) We do not agree. Nor do we agree that there should be a presentation in the two-week course on the modus operandi of the Midcareer Training Program. If we read this correctly, this would heighten the feeling of second-class citizenship of those singled out for the two-week course.
- c. Counselor Function on DD/S Staff. The counselor function is unnecessary and is a serious criticism of current practices. This function should remain the responsibility of the Office Head.
- d. Selection of Participants for the Program. We agree this function should remain with the individual Career Service.
- e. Notification of Participation in the Program. We agree that all career employees should be notified of their rejection or acceptance for the Program.
- f. Annual Reconsideration of Career Employees for the Program. Agree.
- g. Development of a Tailored Plan with Office Counselor. We do not agree; such a plan is impractical if applied to all employees selected for the Program.
- h. Identification of Generalist Support Positions. Agree.



Acting Director of Training

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